

FirstNet Board Names Northern Virginia as Headquarters

FirstNet Press Releases By FirstNet Press

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WASHINGTON – The First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet) today voted to establish Northern Virginia as its corporate headquarters and the Boulder, Colorado area as its technical, engineering and network design headquarters.

Northern Virginia was selected for a number of factors including its close proximity to a high concentration of wireless, technical and public safety expertise.

The Northern Virginia location is also close to the U.S. Commerce Department and public safety stakeholders and associations located in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. Boulder, Colo. is home of the Commerce Department's laboratories, including the Public Safety Communications Research program (PSCR). The PSCR has been a primary technical advisor to public safety on communications issues for 20 years and operates a unique, multi-vendor Long Term Evolution (LTE) network in the Boulder area.

"Picking our corporate and technical headquarters marks an important milestone as we lay the foundation for building this nationwide public safety broadband network," said Board Chairman Sam Ginn. "It will give us greater clarity as we recruit key talent to join the FirstNet team."

The Board also said it would establish one regional office in each of the ten Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) regions. FirstNet office locations will be established on competitive terms and specific locations will be determined as we move forward.

Separately, the FirstNet Board voted today to extend spectrum lease negotiations with the Executive Office of the State of Mississippi and Motorola Solutions, Inc. (With the Bay Area Regional Interoperable Communications Systems Authority (Bay-RICS)) until Nov. 15, 2013. The Board also agreed to reopen discussions with Adams County Communications Center (ADCOM), in Adams County, Colo. and the state of New Jersey. Those negotiations will also conclude by Nov. 15, 2013.

"We don't want to leave any stone unturned in our efforts to reach mutually beneficial spectrum lease agreements with the public safety BTOP projects," said FirstNet Deputy General Manager TJ Kennedy. "I'm hopeful that this extra couple of weeks will result in finalizing agreements with

these projects.”

The Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012 (Tax Relief Act), signed into law in February 2012, created FirstNet, an independent entity within NTIA. The law directs FirstNet to develop and operate a nationwide public safety broadband network, which is to be based on a single, nationwide network architecture, and directed that FirstNet hold the single license for the public safety broadband spectrum in the 700 MHz band. The new law dramatically changed the assumptions on which NTIA awarded the seven public safety BTOP projects in 2010.

After the Tax Relief Act was passed, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) partially suspended the seven projects to ensure that BTOP grants funds would be prudently invested. During the suspension, FirstNet has had the opportunity to review the projects to make sure they would support FirstNet’s mission to create a nationwide public safety network.

About FirstNet

FirstNet will provide emergency responders with the first high-speed, nationwide network dedicated to public safety. FirstNet is designed to improve communication among local, state, regional, tribal and national emergency services personnel. The broadband data network will help save lives and protect the health and safety of all Americans. It will be built using LTE, the most advanced wireless technology available today. FirstNet fulfills a fundamental need of the public safety community for a single, mission-critical communications system enabling force multiplier effectiveness. Overseen by representatives of public safety, government and the wireless industry, FirstNet is an independent entity within the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Telecommunications and Information Administration (www.firstnet.gov).

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